

There were considerations against it. If I were nominated it was feared my acceptance of the nomination would be considered by Genl. Canby as opposition to reconstruction, and that I would be immediately removed and an odious successor appointed. This was a weighty consideration,—especially if the new Constitution be defeated, which all good and sensible men ought to strive to effect. It is a monstrosity. Chaos is preferable to it. It would tie us as to reformation. The negroes and their meaner co-adjutors under the provisions of this Constitution would always defeat amendment.

I did not personally desire the nomination. I have been twice elected by the voice of the people—in the second election without regular opposition—the first instance of the kind in our history. *My ambition was more than satisfied.* If our friends had deemed it best for the State to run my name in this contest, I would have consented to it from motives of patriotism only. They *knew* I did not *personally* desire the nomination. I am conscious that in allowing my name to be run against Holden in 1865—when the prospects of defeat were strong—and in all my subsequent actions—I have acted from unselfish motives—And I am gratified with the belief that our whole people accord to me patriotic motives, and, with the exception of Holden, feel no malevolence against me, and it is not improbable that my name would have been, as you think, the most available one to defeat the monster demagogue, Holden: but I am not sure our friends did not act discreetly in the premises. I think there should be no hesitation in preferring Ashe to Holden—And that no good man, entitled to vote, should fail to vote against the Constitution.

I always desired, as I do now, to support the Constitution of the United States. When the State arrayed herself against it, as I understood it, against my judgment, I yielded obedience to the “powers that be” and therefore acted with fidelity to my new engagements. I desire